

Applicant(s): Bonutti, Peter M
Application No.: 09/728,553
Examiner: A Lewis

Remarks

Claims 171-175, 177, 179-194, 200, 201, 205, 207, 209, 210, 212-217, and 223-242 are pending in the application and are presented for the Examiner's review and consideration. Claims 207 and 212 have been amended and claims 100-106, 169, 170, 178, 199, 202-204, 206, 208, and 211 have been cancelled. Applicant believes the claim amendments, cancellations, and the accompanying remarks herein serve to clarify the present invention and are independent of patentability. No new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the allowance of claims 171-175, 177, 179-194, 200, 201, 205, 209, 210, 213-217, and 223-242. Additionally, the status of claims 207 and 212 was not provided in the above references Office Action. However, in the Office Action mailed November 24, 2003, the Examiner indicated that claims 207 and 212 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant has rewritten claims 207 and 212 as required by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections

Claims 100-106, 169, 170, 178, 199, 202-204, 206, 208, and 211 were rejected. Applicant has cancelled these claims rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

Conclusion

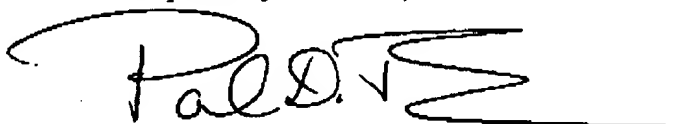
For all of the above reasons, the claim rejections are believed to have been overcome, placing all pending claims in condition for allowance, and reconsideration and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

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Please charge any required fee (or credit any overpayments of fees) to the Deposit
Account of the undersigned, Account No. 500601 (Docket No. 780-A02-033).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul D. Bianco", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul D. Bianco, Reg. # 43,500

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